

USDA/Rural Development

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News Release

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ALLAN R. JOHNSON NAMED DIRECTOR FOR LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

WASHINGTON, June 20, 2003-- Under Secretary for USDA Rural Development, Thomas C. Dorr today announced the selection of Allan R. Johnson as Director of Legislative and Public Affairs for USDA Rural Development. Johnson will serve as the central point of contact for legislative and public affairs for USDA Rural Development's housing, business and utility programs.

"Allan's keen understanding of issues important to rural America and his stellar career in the private sector, both in agriculture and business, will be of great benefit to Rural Development," said Dorr.

Johnson, of Camdenton, Mo., has spent the last three years as a senior consultant for Achieva, Inc., an Indiana public affairs firm working for a number of agribusiness firms and trade associations. Prior to his current employment, Johnson was president and chief executive officer of Farm Progress Companies from 1990 to 2000 where he grew the company from eight to 37 publications in addition to overseeing 20 office locations, 225 employees and revenues of \$40 million.

Johnson currently serves as trustee of the North Dakota State University Development Foundation, The Farm Foundation and is a member of various industry organizations, including the American Agricultural Editors Association and National Association of Farm Broadcasters. He is the past grand president of Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity, past president of the Agricultural Publishers Association, and former chairman of the National FFA Sponsors' Board.

Johnson, **a native of Almont, North Dakota**, earned a Bachelors degree in agronomy from North Dakota State University. He served as a member of the 101st Airborne in 1969-70 and was awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart for his combat service in Vietnam.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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